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Balme from Gilead

TO
Recouer Conscience.

In a Sermon Preached at *Pauls-Crosse*,
Octob. 20. 1616.

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Exposition of the Gospel of St. John

TO
The
Second Conference
of the
Second Session of the
Year 1619.

By
John Wycliffe,
Bishop of Dunelm.



Exposition of the
Gospel of St. John



To the READER.



Onchsafe, good Reader, in a word or two to understand the occasion of bringing this MEDITATION to the Presse, that was purposed onely for the Pulpit: the rather for that it commeth not from the Authors owne hand, who would no doubt more exactly haue polished it, could hee haue beeene perswaded to publish it himselfe. But hee, out of his modestie (as hee deliuered it, not like a

To the Reader.

Scholler his Lesson learned without
Booke, nor brought with him any
intent to have it further made pub-
like, so) could not be induced (though
instantly laboured both by myself
and many others, desiring further
fruite of so learned and religious a
Labour) either to publish it himselfe,
or to have any hand at all in the pub-
lishing of it.

Howbeit at length, upon extreme
importunity (rather to preuent the
wrong that by imperfect Copies prin-
ted he might otherwise sustaine, than
to satisfie such as were earnest futers
to him for the same) bee was with
much adoe drawne before his depar-
ture from the Citie, to deliner his
Notes to a friend, (with reference of
the whole busynesse, to the iudgement
and discretion of others, to deale in,
and dispose of as they should deeme
fit) who being present at the speaking
of it, with the Authors Notes, and
his

To the Reader.

his owne helpe, hath done his endeour so penne it as neare as he could, to that whiche by the Author himselfe was then delivered. Whiche though it be not altogether verbatim the same, yet it is hoped that there is not any thing materiall wanting, that the diligent hearer shall desire: besides that hee shall finde some things ouer and above, that straits of Time, and default of Memory were then a meanes to keepe backe.

If any aske, what needed such importunitie in this busynesse, there being already so many Sermons abroad, that euern Printers themselues complaine, that the Presse is oppressed with them? I auerse: True it is, that there are Sermons indeed abroad by some more then enough; but yet not enough (I dare say it) such as this is, that deale so pithily, so effectually, in points of practise so necessarie, so ordinarie, as this

To the Reader.

dorb; wherein Learning and Pietie, delightfull manner of handling, together with profitable and vsefull matter, soconcurre, that if it please not any, they are those alone, whose prophane palates can relish nothing but saoureth of grace, though never so delightful otherwise: if it profit not any, it is to be feared they are such, whose corrupt Consciences are grown wellnigh irrecoverable, if not wholly incurable.

But I am loath to bee long, where the worke it selfe is not. This little bee spoken rather in way of Apologie for my selfe and such others as urged the publishing of it, than in commendation of the worke, which in the very reading of it, to any iudicious, ingenious, and religious, will sufficiently commend it selfe. For my selfe, considering the generall approbation giuen it by all sorts that heard it, together with the earnest

To the Reader.

nest suits of many others, so instant-
ly desiring it upon their reports,
and finding upon view and surueigh
the thing it selfe fally to answer
both the reports of the one, and the
desires of the other, I was right wil-
ling and ready (as hee speaketh in
Plato) though one barren hitherto in
this kind my selfe, to performe some
Midwaine-like office to another, for
the further enlargetment of so generally
blessed, and so deservedly desired a
birth. Wherein if thou shalt chance to
 finde any defects, consider but (I pray
thee) how hard a thing it is for ano-
ther (though not unskilfull) to perfect
a worke that some curious Artist hath
left unfinished.

Socrates apud
Plat. in Theæt

And so wishing onely, that it may
through Gods gracious assistance, ei-
ther worke into, or increase in thee
a good Conscience, and the comfort
thereof; I leaue the worke to thy per-
usal, and it to his blessing, whose
gift

To the Reader.

gift a good Conscience is, and with
whom, beside the present comfort of
is here, is a plentifull reward reserv-
ed for it elsewhere.

Thine in Christ,

THOMAS GATACRE.

Balme



Balme from Gilead,
TO
Recouer Conscience.

HEB. 13. 18.

For we are assured, that we
have a good Conscience, desiring
in all things to walke honestly.

I Will vse no other Pre-
face, but the short one
before my Text; and
that not as a Preface,
but in way of earnest suit, *Pray for mee:* For I desire this day, in
treating of a good CONSCIENCE,
both so my selfe to keepe and dis-
charge one, and so to speake home
to yours, that the dead Consciencies
may

may heare the voyce of God in my Text, and be quickned, the secure ones awakened, the troubled ones comforted, the tender confirmed, the good bettered, and all receive some light and life: that wee may all depart hence in the peace of a good Conscience, assured (with our Apostle) that we haue a good one, desiring in all things to walke honestly.

This worke, God witnesssing to my Conscience, I much desire to doe; and in so doing, I know I desire a worthy worke: A worke so highly and peculiarly needfull for these times, that a sharpe Seer of them, was often heard to pray, that God would stirre vp some to Write and Preach of this Argument: and another to *Augstines* wish, That *Hee might heare Paul preach*, addeth his owne; That the Text and Theame might be C O N S C I E N C E: they both saw it gasping, drawing on, and dying; and there-

therefore desired that some life
migth bee put into and kept in it,
before it should bee vtterly ouer-
whelmed in death and darknesse.

The time indeede was, in the
beginning of Time, when *Adam*
by his first Sinne, brought death
vpon his Soule, and caused it to
reigne ouer all the powers of it,
that this Facultie had most life left
in it, like *Jobs* Messengers, to tell
newes of the great losse. This lit-
tle spark was left fresh, to shew
what great light had beeene extin-
guished; but now this also through
affected blindnesse and wilfull ma-
lice, is so smothered and suffoca-
ted, through a daily custome, of
sinning, the eyes of it so pecked
out, the mouth so stopped, the
very heart of it so wounded and
quelled; that (as the world inst-
ly complaynes) it is dead long
since, yea, long since buried in
the graue of habituall sinning,
with

*scintilla reliq.
recte rationis.
Lips.*

with the stone of hardnesse rouled vpon it; that, as *Marie* said of *Lazarus*, the very name of it is grown vnsauory, odious, and (I feare) ridiculous in the eares of many. Is it not then high time for the Lord to worke? and for vs to see if by crying aloud (as *Elias* said of the dead I-doll) we may fetch life againe into it, which is the very life of our spirituall life, and soule of our soule?

2.

The time is now come vpon vs, wherein men affect and desire good Names, Estates, Wives, Houses, good Clothes, good euerie thing; but content themselves with meane and vile Consciencies, which ought to be the chiefe and onely good. Wherein men doe to exercise and shew, in Preaching, in Hearing, in Trading, and all manner of conuersing, their Memorie, their skill and curting, & all other their good parts, as they call

call them, neglecting this which is the **W H O L E** of a Man; and despising **Pauls Exercise**, and **Pauls Policie**, **To have a good Conscience before God and Man**: Wherein men loue preaching indeede and knowledge, but not wholesome doctrine; Preaching to the Conscience and knowledge of themselves, which makes this Pulpit and Church-yard full of Polemicall and Schoole-diuitie; while the plaine practicall, and asketicall part lyeth vntilled and vnguarded: which maketh **Citie** and **Country** full of **Craft** and **Cunning**, but void and destitute, not onely of the power but shew of Conscience. All which maketh me to chuse rather with the Apostle to speake fiew wordes to the Heart, then tenne thousand to the Eare; yea one to shew you a good **Conscience**, then tenthousand to shew all the **Science** in the world.

Act. 24.16.
and 33.

1. Cor. 14.

world. *¶ Sermon you heare vpon
Sermon, till this Manna comes out
at your nostrils: but as one said of
Lawes; one is yet wanting for the
practising of all therest. Now Con-
science is the spring of practise, and
the Wheele that must set all the
rest on going. Is it not high time
to speake to Conscience, that wee
be no longer hearers onely, but do-
ers also? ¶ But this is done
¶ The tyme is now approaching,
as we may easily discerue, if wee
haue not drinke or slept out our
eyes, as in the times of Noah, in
which Christ is pouring out his
Viols vpon the earth; and shortly,
wherein the Bookes shall be ope-
ned; these clasped and sealed
Bookes of our Consciencies, the
Concretes wherof are now like
Letters written with the Iuyce of
Orenge, that cannot be read till
it come to that fire which shall
make the secrcts of all hearts legi-
ble.*

ble; yea, every the least Fraction, even the least idle thought or speech: all which are faithfully registered in them? Is it not then high time to looke into these Bookes, to cast vp these Bookes; yea, to be well skilled and versed in them, for the sake & rectifying whereof all other good Bookes are written, that we might be able to prooue and examine our selues, whether vpon good ground we can say with our Apostle, *wee are assured we have a good conscience, &c.*

Which Text when I reade and pronounce, which I doe that you may well understand, mee thinkes I heare *Pauls* voyce, and discerne his Spirit, as the Mayd knew *Peters* voyce. I heare him vse the like appeale in the very like case, when the *Hebreues* accused him, and *Ananias* bade smite him on the mouth; *I haue in all good Conscience serued God to this day.*

In the selfe-same case, when they
hyred *Tertullus* to paint him out
with his Rhetorickē for a pesti-
lent fellow, a troubler and com-
motioner of the *whole world*, hee
vsed the like prouocation; *I en-
denour alwayes to haue a good Con-
science towards God and man* The
very like protestation against the
surmises of the same *Hebreus*, Rom.
9. Yea, so often, that 2. Cor. 1. 12. he
cals this, and claimes it as his owne
glory: *This is my boasting, a good Con-
science*. So that as we discerne
Ships by their Flags; so may wee
Paul by this flagge of comfort and
defiance, which hee hangs out al-
most in euery Epistle; and if wee
may guesse at the whole cloth by
the List, this Epistle, as this Tri-
umph, is his: *And worthily indeed
becomes it this chosen vessel, to
glory in this choise Jewell, with
which the whole world com-
pared and weighed in the Ballance,*

will

will bee found as light as droffe
and vanity, and without this, Loffe,
Dung, and vexation of Spirit.
For mine owne part, when I view
this triumph, and the Apostle so
frequently and so confidently v-
sing it; I professe my selfe deeply
affected therewithall. The world
hath many stately sights, glorious
objects, as namely, strong Towers,
tall Ships vnder saile, Armies vn-
der Banners, sumptuous Buildings,
pleasant Orchards and Groues:
but when I represent to my selfe,
when I serioully conceiue and con-
sider *Paul*, ryding in this trium-
phant Chariot, aduanced aboue
the reach of mens thoughts and
tongues, yea aboue all sublunarie
changes, all the fore-mentioned
are in mine eies, but stately bables,
pompous fantasies, painted Pa-
geants. Did *Paul* in the fruition of
this, enuy *Agrippa's* golden chaine?
No: It was but for manners sake

Paul excepted his Chaine. And he
that hath this good, needs not en-
uie, I say, not any greatnesse here
present: No not Nebuchadnezzers
stalking in his magnificent Galle-
ries, built for his honour: The great
Turke garded with his Ianizaries:
The triple crowned man of pride
riding vpon mens shoulders, and
treading vpon Emperours neckes:
Much lesse the rich Foole in the
Gospell, with his goods increasing,
and Barnes enlarged: or the rich
Glutton, with his delicate fare and
purple rayment, or any other gli-
sterring apperances of happinesse,
which dazzle the eyes of the doting
world. Let become of the rest what
will, so that this bee my Lot and
portion (which euer let be my wish
aboue all wishes) that through
Gods grace and Christs bloud, I
may haue a good *Conscience*, and be
assured that I haue one, *desiring in
all things to walke honestly.*

In

In which Text or * Woofe of Scripture, which I may call *Pauls Triumph*, I finde these Threads: 1. The excellent matter, *A good Conscience*. 2. The glorious manner, *A certayne confidence*.

The Trophies are not meane and base, but the richest gift which Christ ascending on high, left vs to rejoyce in, *a good Conscience*.

The boasting is not vaine: it's no fantasticall opinion, no fanaticall Reuelation, but a true perswasion; *wee are assured*: It's no audacious presumption, but a grounded asser-tion, built vpon these soure pillars, as so many Characters of a good conscience. 1. *Desiring*, 2. *In all things*, 3. *To walke or conuerse*, 4. *Honestly*.

Now that wee may more distinctly apprehend the Contents of the Text, and that which is best of all, attaine the scope and subject-matter thereof, which is the end of

* σῶμα γενεράτων
τες γενενσ.

Seges gloria.

Serius trium-phus.

all, a GOOD CONSCIENCE; because many talke of Conscience, few know it; I will first discouer the Nature of it, which hath beene darkened by Schoole definitions, and Rhetoricall descriptions.

Secondly, because many slips and bad ones goe for currant and good ones: most bragge of a good one, and fewest haue it; I will shew you the goodness thereof, wherein it consists, how it is made good, and how it is distinguished from seeming good ones, and how by foure infallible Characters it's certainly approoued and knowne to be good.

Because it's a dead commodity, a Grape of *Canaan*, the sweetnesse whereoffew haue tasted, and they that haue it cannot vtter it; I will shadow out the excellency of it, as my poore skill and experience will allow me.

Lastly, when I haue taught Conscience

science to know it selfe and it owne worth; I will set it a worke to doe it office in the application of the points of this & al other Sermons.

Briefly collect and remarke the heads.

1. *What Conscience is.*

2. *What a good one is; how it may be discerned from bad ones, and knowne to be good.*

3. *How good a thing it is.*

And 4. *What is the vse, office and effect of a good one.*

The first part.

For the nature of it. Things that are neerest, and most neerly concerne vs, are commonly farthest off our knowledge and respect. As God, that is in vs and neere vnto vs; our owne faces and visages are hardliest knowne, hardest remembred. Some fooles doubt whether there bee such a thing in the yea or no. *Origen* thought it

a Spirit or *Genius*, associated to our soules, to guide and tutor them: but this is like some of his other conceits. The carnal Atheist thinks it a melancholy humour of the body, and so thinkes all the checks thereof to bee effects of Humour. The Schoole-men somewhat acuter, thought it, some, an habit, some, an act of the soule. The latter Diuines, a faculty of the intellectuall part: but the truth is, it's no such In-mate, no such Guest of the soule, but an in-bred faculty of it: *A noble and divine power, planted of God in the soule, working upon it selfe by reflection: Or thus; The soule of a man recouyling upon it selfe.*

A facultie I call it, because it produceth acts, and is not got & lost as habits are, but is inseparable from the soule, immoueable from the subiect, as neither acts nor habits are, which is *Thomas* hischiefe reason to prooue Conscience an act,

quia

*cum alia scit
animus scientia
dicitur cum seip-
sum, Conscien-
tia, &c.*
Hugo & Ber-
nardus.

qua deponi potest; the cleane contrary whereof is true, though indeed one might thinke some had laid aside and lost their Conscience.

A noble faculty I call it, because so admirably strange in the reciprocall working of it. The eye of man sees not it selfe, but by the helpe of a looking glasse: neither hath any creature in this world this priuiledge and propertie besides the soule of man. I giue it roome, and place it in the whole soule, and thrust it not, as some haue done, like a spider, into some corner of it, as if it were a part of a part; whereas the operation and power of it is circumscribed in no narrower bounds then the soule it selfe, and therefore the Hebrewes more aptly call it *the Heart or Soule*, and the Grecians *καρδία*. *If our heart condemne us, 1. Joh. 3.20.*

It hath indeed the vnderstanding for the Throne and Pallace thereof,

thereof, where it is chiefly resident, whereby it exerciseth the principall functions, from whence commonly it hath it name *Conscience*; as the Emperor of *Russia* from *Mosco* his chiefe Citie: and looke how the soule it selfe is chiefly seated in the head, and there performeth the chiefe actions of Reason, Discourse and Sense, yet is in all and euerie part of the bodie, and in them performeth baser and meaner offices of Nourishment and Motion: right so the Conscience keepeth a compleat Court in the whole Soule, commonly called *Forum Conscientie*.

In the Vnderstanding part it is a Judge, determining and prescribing, absolving & condemning *de iure*. In the memory, it is a Register, a Recorder, and witnesse, testifying *de Facto*. In the Will and Affections, a Layler and Executioner, punishing and rewarding. Say we not

not in common vse of Speech, which is the Emperour of Words. My Conscience tells me I did or did not such a thing, which is an Action of the Memory? My Conscience bids mee doe, or forbids me to doe this or this, which is but an Action of the Will: It smites mee, it checks mee, it comforts, or it torments mee: what are these but Actions of the Affections recouyling vpon the Soule? But if any list to contend about these subtilties, *Conscience* tells them, it hath no such custome. *Conscience* falsely so called, delighteth to languish about Questions not tending to Edification; Let vs rather turne our eyes, to behold and wonder at the Diuine royalties and endowments of it, it being in man the principall part of GODS Image, and that by which man resembleth most the *Anstarchie* and selfe-sufficiencie of GOD,

GOD, which I grant is proper to his Infinitenesse, to be content and compleat within it selfe: but vnder him, and with his leaue and loue, this Facultie makes man selfe sufficient and independant of other Creatures; like vnto those selfe mouing Engins, which haue their Principle of Motion within themselues. Thus, *Adam*, when he was alone, was not yet alone and desolate, but might conuerse with this his Conscience, as well as with a thousand Companions and Acquaintances.

Secondly, God hath giuen it more force and power to worke vpon men, then all other Agents whatsoeuer: It being internall and domesticall, hath the aduantage of all Forraigne and Outward Man in this respect being like to the Earth, immouable of all the windes, though at once they should blow from all the points of

the Compasse, yet easily shaken by a vapour from within: whence it is that the Approofes and Reproofes of it, are so powerfull and terrible, the one clearing more then any Cordiall, the other gnawing more then any Chest-worme; tormenting worse then hot Pin-sers, boyling Caldrons, Rackes, Strappadoes, or what other the cruelty of Tyrants hath inuented. If one had Angels daily ascending and descending, as *Jacob* had to comfort him, it were not so comfortable, or if langold or coupled to Diuell's, no more terrible.

Thirdly, it beeing indiuiduall and inseparable, there is no putting of it to flight, or flying from it: *Nec fugere, nec fugare poteris*. It was bred and borne with vs, it will liue and dye with vs. Agues a man may shake off, Tyrants and ill Masters a man may flie from: but this saith (as *Ruth* to *Naomi*)

Lypſ. Pol.

I will goe with thee whither soever thou goest. It hath more immediate deputation and authoritie from GOD (of whom all principalities and powers receiue theirs) then Angels, Kings, Magistrates, Father, mother, or any other Superior. It's onely Inferiour to GOD: It is a certaine middle thing betweene God and Man, and hath the dignitie of Earles and Nobles, that are *Comites Regum*. And so *Paul* is bolde, *Romans 9.* to call his Conscience a Co-witnesse with God, whence it hath the Name Conscience, there beeing no other Creature with whom it can beare witnesse: none knowing what is in Man, saue God, and the Spirit, or Conscience which is man; which makes *Paul* ioyne them in one Appeale, *Romans 9.* It's his Spie and Intelligencer in our bosomes and Bed-chambers: a most exact Notarie

arie of what euer wee thinke or doe: It's his Lieutenant, and vnder him the principall Commander, and chiefe Controller of Mans life; yea, euerie mans GOD in that sense that *Moses* was *Aarons*. It's the surest Prognostication and Praiudgement of GODS last judgement, and best Almanacke within a Mans owne breast, foretelling him what will become of him at that day.

Wonderfull is the Greatnesse and Soueraigntie of it: Oh men therefore, and oh Consciences, know your selues, and in this sense loue, respect, and reuerence your selues more then all other Creatures, Friends and Acquaintance: If they could speake, they would say to mans Conscience, as the people to *David*, A thousand of vs are not equall to thee in worth. It fares with Conscience as with simple Constables;

Many

*Preiudicium
extremi Iudicy.*
Tertul.

Many an Officer, if hee knew his place, would stand more vpon it, and take more vpon him then hee doth. The Husbandman were happie, if he knew his happiness: The Horse were strong, if he knew his strength. Conscience, if it knew power and authoritie, would not suffer it selfe so to be silenced, abusid, snibbed, and kept vnder, being vnder G.O.D, the Lord Controuller of the Soule, and Super-visour of our life.

The second part.

Thus haue wee seene in part the greatnessse of conscience: doth it not concerne vs now to see the goodnesse of it; the greatnessse of it making it, if good, nothing better, if bad, nothing worse; the surest Friend and the severest Foe? Whose heart burnes not within him, to heare wherein that goodnesse

nesse consists, and how hee may come by it.

The goodnessse of it, is the peace of it; for stirring, accusing, and galling Consciences, are consequents of Sinne, and presuppose some euill.

They secondly proue good vnto vs onely by accident, and Gods goodnessse, which maketh them as afflictions, gather Grapes of Thornes: yea all things worke to the best of his beloued, as Physicians doe Poysons in their Confessions.

And thirdly, they doe not alwaies produce this effect. Sometimes, as Sickneses and Purgatiōns, they are in order to health, as in the Iewes, *Act. 2.* Oftentimes as in *Cain, Judas, Achitophel*, they destroy their owners.

Good Consciences therefore, properly to speake, are onely quiet ones, excusing and comforting;

but here take heed the Diuell, the great Impostor of our Soules, put not vpon our folly and simplicity, three sorts of quiet ones, as hee doth to most. The *Blinde*, the *Secure*, and the *Seared*.

Blinde and ignorant Consciences speake peace, or hold their peace, because they haue not skill enough to accuse & finde fault: they swal·low many a fly, and digest all well enough. While the scales were vp·on *Pauls* eyes, hee was aliue and quiet: he thought Concupis·cence, the sincke and breeder of all sinne, to be no sinne. Such Consciences discerne sinnes as wee doe Starres in a darke night; see onely the great ones of the first magnitude, where·as a bright Euening discouers mil·lions: or as we see a few moates in darke houses, which Sunne light shewes to be infinite. Such thinke good meaning will serue the turne, that all Religions will saue, or a

Lord

Lord haue mercy on vs, at the last gaspe: and that which is worst of all, they loue to liue vnder blinde Sir *Johnes*, seeke darke corners, say they are not Booke-learned, nor indeed will suffer their Consciences to proue good Lawyers in Gods Booke, lest they should proue common Barrettors. The Law which nature hath engrauen they tread out with sinnes, as men do the ingrauings of tombes they walke on, with foule shooes: they dare not looke in the Glasse of Gods Law, which makes sinne abound, lest the foulenesse of their Soules should affright them. A number of such sottish Soules there be, whose Consciences if God opens ashee did the eyes of the Prophets Seruant, they shall see Armies and Legions of sins and Diuels in them.

In as pitifull a plight as this, are secure, sleepy, and droufie Consciences, who see, but will not see;

with whom Sinne, Sathan, and their Conscience is not at Peace, but at Truce for a time: safe they are not, onely secure they bee and carelesse. These sleepe and delight in sleeping; and two wayes especially, the Diuell pipes and luls them asleepe, by Mirth, and by Busynesse. Ease and Prosperitie slayes some fooles, Wealth and Heartsease, like *Dalilah*, rockes them asleepe on her lap: Iesting and merry tales, eating and drinking casts them into a spirit of slumber, and puts their Sinne and Iudgement farre away, and makes them say they shall never be moued. While they prosper and flourish in the world, their Consciences deale as Creditors with their debtors: whiles they are in trading and doing, say nothing to them, but if once downe the winde, in sicknesse, crosses and pouerty, then Arrest vpon Arrest, Action vpon Action, then

then come the Fowles of the Aire
and seaze vpon the fickle Soule, as
the Rauens vpon sickle sheepes,
write bitter things against them,
and make them possesse the sinne
of their youth. Marke this you
that dwell at ease, and swimme in
wealth in *London*. Your Conscien-
ces that lie stil like sleepy Mastiues;
in Plague times and sweating sick-
nesses, they flie in the throat: they
flatter like Parasites in Prosperitie,
and like Sycophants accuse in Ad-
uersitie, Businesse also and Cares
of this life choake the Conscience,
and the voice of manifold employ-
ments drowne the voice of Con-
science, as the Drummes in the Sa-
crifices to *Molech* the cry of the In-
fants. And such Consciences are
quiet, not because they are at
Peace, but because they are not at
Leasure. Marke then you that haue
Mils of businesse in your Heads,
whole *West-Minster-Hals, Brusses,*

Exchanges and *East-Indies*, (as I feare many of you haue whilst I am speaking to your Conscience) that making haste to be rich, ouer-lay your braines with affaires, are so busie in your Counting-house and Bookes, and that vpon this very Day, that you neuer haue once in a weeke, or yeere, an houres space to conferre with your poore Consciences; yea, when did you? Let your Consciences answere within you. No, but if at a Sermon you appoint them a time, and say you will, you disappoint them and say as *Agrippa to Paul*, *wee will heare thee another time*: and for the most part doe as hee did, that is, neuer heare them againe.

All these sleepers haue but a frensie mans sleepe; this Tranquillitie will be sure to end in a Tempest.

Yet in a more horrible case, and step nearer Hell, are such as feare their Consciences with an hot

Iron,

Iron, harden them of purpose, as men doe Steele, by quenching the motions of them; brand them with often sinning against their checking; fleshing tender Nouices with this counsell, when their Consciences trouble them for any thing, then to doe it the rather, and so they shall heare no more of them: and so it proues through Gods iust judgement giuing them ouer to a reprobate sense, that their Consciences serue them as *Moses* did *Phabraob*, hauing receiued many repulses, and at last commanded to come no more in sight, forbare to lose any more breath vnto him, but complained to God, who swept him and his Hoast away with a finall destruction.

When Tutors and Pædagogues are weary with Pupils, they giue them ouer to their Parents fury: these are *autoxarapitai*, and to these villaines there is no peace; saith

my God, and my Text. These mens Consciences if euer they awake, (as seldome they doe) they awake as *Jonas*, in fearefull astonishment; and if they sleepe out this life till their long sleepe, yet their Condemnation sleepeth not. Thinke of this you monsters, scorneres, and mocke-Gods, that forget your Consciences, lest they awake and teare you in peeces. Be not my Brethren deceipted with any of these deceiuing Consciences; Children of darknesse: Though Conscience be not vsually mocked, yet many *deceive their owne heart*, Iam.1.26. for want of examination. Many say and thinke in their Consciences, that they haue good Consciences, when GOD saith, Oh that this people had such a good Conscience: and so *Paul* speakes in my Text, as once to *Agrippa*, Oh that you were as I am, assured that you haue a good Conscience, desiring, &c.

What

What then is a good Conscience? That which speakes Peace with Gods allowance, which is a messenger of good things between God and vs, that vpon good grounds, is in good termes with God: It lies in the lawfull peace of it, and not in integritie and freedome from sinne. If my Conscience accuse mee not, yet am I not thereby iustified, God is greater then my Conscience. If any Conscience say to any man, hee hath no sinne, it lies in the throat, and is a Lyer. *Adam* onely had such a Paradise, such a good Conscience, walking with God, without sinne, without feare, in the state of innocency. There is but one way now to come to it: our peace is now to be had by Mediation and Reconciliation; being iustified by Christes bloud wee haue this peace. In stead of many, marke one remarkable place of Scripture for this

Heb.10.2

this purpose. If you aske what makes a good Conscience, there is but one thing in the world will make it, *Heb.9.14.* *The bloud of Christ once offered by his eternall Spirit, without fault, purgeth our Consciences from dead workes.* Yea, so admirable is the force of this bloud, that it leaues no more conscience of Sinne within it. This Lambe takes them away, and carries them out of Gods remembrance into the Wildernesse of obliuion. If thy Conscience rage as the Sea, Christ cast into it, as *Ionas*, whists all the waues of it. If the Law make it as Mount *Sinay*, couered with darkenesse, the Gospell calmes and lightens it presently. If tossed as the Ship where the Disciples sayled in the night, hee rebukes the VVindes, and they are still : if the Diuels rend and rage in it, hee casts them out presently.

The Taylor came in trembling,
ready

ready to fordoe himselfe, *Believe* in *Christ*, sent him out leaping and reioycing. It's strange how freely, effectually, and speedily hee quiets all. Oh all ill Consciences, heare and believe; this is the honour, royalty, and peculiar dignitie of Christ's bloud, to pacifie and make good our Consciences! I dee not so much admire at all his miraculous healings of Diseases, Lepries, Blindnesse, and Lamenesse, Dæmoniackes of all sorts, as I doe at his gratiouse and sodaine quieting of the Conscience of *Mary Magdalene*, of *Zacheus*, of *Paul*; and so the like vertue this bloud hath still, to day and yesterday the same. Nothing else in the world hath this vertue saue his bloud: all other merriments haue no more power to quiet Conscience, then Holy-water and Charmes to coniure the Diuell.

I finde in a French Comedie
one

one brought in as troubled in
Conscience for sinne, and he runs
vp and downe like a Hart with
an Arrow in the side, for reme-
die, hee buyes a Pardon, runnes to
Shrift, whips hirselfe, goes on
Pilgrimages; and all this while, like
an Aguish man that drinkeſ water,
or leapeſ into a Poole, his disease
increaſeth; then falleſ hee to ſeeke
merry company, to ſee if hee can
play away his trouble; but like
Sauls illſpirit, it returnes with grea-
ter violence, & brings ſeuен worse
with it to torment. In the end hee
findes Christ, or rather is found of
Christ, and ſo findes peace, & this is
the good Conscience we ſpeak of,
to which being in Christ, there is
no Condemnation, no Accuſation.
Wouldſt thou purcaſe a good
conscience at an eaſier rate? wouldſt
thou haue it for ſleeping? When
thou haſt tried al conculſions, come
hither & buy ſalue for thy Conſci-
ence

ence without money. When thou hast spent all thy time and money about what will not quiet thy minde, as *Alchimists* smoake out all in seeking the *Philosophers-stone*, here is that which will doe it ; belieue and proue, and thou and thy Conscience shall be safe and quiet : this is approued, thus *Paul* got his. Yea, but is this all ? Is it so cheape and easie a thing ? May we now sing a *Requiem* to our Soules, lay the reynes on our neckes, cast care away, and doe what we list ? I feare not such an obiection from a true belieuing Conscience. They that prattle thus, know not *Ingeniuū fidei & bonae Conscientiae*, the good nature of Faith and a good Conscience.

Let me not daube your Consciences with vntempered Morter. Faith as it pacifieth, so it purifieth Conscience. Christ purgeth our consciences to serue the liuing *God*, and after all his cures, bids the healed

led goe away and walke after the Spirit, and sin no more. There are indeed a generation of Libertines and hypocrites that serue Christ, as *Lewes the 11.* is reported to haue serued his leaden *Crucifixe* which he vsed to weare in his hat, & when he had blasphemed or done any viliany, hee would pull it off and kisse it, and so sin ouer and ouer againe; like our common Swearers, that crye God mercy, and aske him leauue to abuse his Name againe, and that wittingly and willingly.

These and such like, let their Consciences speake peace to them, as the Fryer in *Stephan*, absolued a Gentleman, that would needes pay well, yet would not promise to amend his fault, in stead of an Absolution hee pronounced a Curse vpon him in Latine, which hee tooke for pay ; *Christ absolue thee, which I beleue bee will not; and bring thee to Heaven, which is impossible.*

Many

Many Sentences hath the Master of Sentences borrowed from *Ambrose* against such Consciences, which I omit to rehearse, least as *Abners* body, they hinder the passing of the people by. A good Conscience stands not with a purpose of finning; no, not with an irresolution against sin. He is a foole and a vaine mocker, no true penitent, that mournes for sinne past, and yet meanes at the same time to sin for the time to come. With which Sophisine the most perish at this day, with this in their mouthes; *They believe on Christ and haue as good a Conscience as the best*, and yet walke in sinne. But oh thou vaine fellow, shew mee *Pauls* good Conscience by *Pauls* proofe, by his *Desire in all things, &c.* Is Christ able to saue thee, and is he not able to sanctifie thee? Let me with *Tertullian*, tell thee, that the promises standing true, thy faith is false, & the Gospell remaining

remaining safe, thou shalt perish.

Titus, a Trades-man or Lawyer here present, haply is desirous to haue peace of Conscience, is sorry for his oathes and fraudulēt courses this week past, but knowes he shall fall to the like the weeke comming, hates them not, and meanes not to striue against them, but to returne to the myre ; my Text saith not to him, *Goe in peace*, to such loose and licentious Consciences that make Christ a bawd of sinning, & Faith a cloak of liberty. I haue heard that the Pope hath sold a Pardon for a Murther past, with a dispensation annexed for the next : but Christ my Lord and master (as bountifull & gratiouse as he is) grants no such. If he forgiue that which is past, he giues at least so much Grace, as to deny vngodlynesse for the time to come. To conclude this point, thou desirest a good conscience, without indenting or conditioning, I bid thee

thee beleeue in Christ, & thou hast
one; yet take this, not into the bar-
gaine, but as an after prouiso: Art
thou willing to haue a good Con-
science, and to be assured thereof?
here follow foure infallible Cha-
racters and markes of a good one,
which I desire you to marke atten-
tively, and by them to trie your
Consciences throughly. Hitherto
I haue shewed how you may get
one: now how you may proue
one. Here are foure Elements or
humors, which well compounded
& mixed, make vp a perfect health
of Conscience: if any one be wan-
ting, or faile in a iust measure or
proportion, Conscience is accor-
dingly defective and sicke.

The first, is that which must be
the first in euery good action, that
is, the *will*, that the bent & inclina-
tion of that be set right. I would the
word had been plainly translated as
it is in other places, *verbatim*, *wil-*
desirous.
ling:

ling: It implies first; that he that hath a good Conscience, doth not onely doe well, but wills to doe well, doth it voluntarily, not forcedly, or out of externall and sinistre motions, but from an internall principle, a sanctified and rectified will, which God accepts for the deed, and aboue the deed. Secondly, that he doth not onely wish and faintly desire, which Translation may flatter an hypocrite that hath some sluggish lusts and some sudden good pangs and moodes, and such as for the time little differ in sickenesse and starts from a regenerate will: but the word notes a strong and settled resolution, a constant purpose, and such as produceth endeavour. Hee that will be rich, pierceth himselfe through with many sorrowes, where the same word is vsed; I grant it is *Carnificina*, a racking to a good Conscience, to say, It must alwayes

always doe well; and contrarily, it's a true ground of comfort, to say, that a will and purpose is sufficient testimonie and approofe of a good one: but then it must bee meant, not euery languishing and lazie flash of cuerie wisher and woulder, but of a willer; and this word is equall with the other two, which are good Synonimaes and Glosses vpon this, vsed by *Paul*, *Acts 23. 24.* *I labour, or exercise my selfe, and πεπονιζω, I lay my policie,* or bend my wit and will to haue a good Conscience, and to serue God, &c.

It may bee said of some, They would be good, but they haue no will to it. There is none so prodigall or slothfull but would bee rich; Yet we say not, such will be rich, that is, set it downe, determine it *ultimata voluntate*. There are none so wicked, but at some times would bee good, and leauue

sinne; but these dispositions breed imperfect Essayes and profers, ripen not, hold not, discerne not the name of Will. Corrupt flesh hath many such Propensities and Bubbles, and is very prodigall in momentanie purposes, and promises; but *David* saith, hee will keepe Gods Commandements: *I haue vowed, sworne, &c.* when *Michol* mocked, *I will yet be more vile*; as resolute Swaggerers, whose Will is set and sould to sinne: They sinne and will sinne, say Preachers what they can. *Ahab* will goe, crie *Micaiah* what hee please; so *Iosuah* will serue God, let others doe what they will. Sanctified Will may bee crossed, and captiuated, and hindered, but yet it holds it owne bent, and ouercomes the Law of Rebellion, is predominant, and can neuier be forced to sinne, or to will to sinne, without a curbe in the mouth, the

the more stiffe and ready this Will
is, the better Symptome of a good
Conscience.

Secondly, this will must extend
it selfe to all; Though in many
things our deeds faile: which
extent let *Paul* expound with a
distribution, towards GOD and
Man, *Acts 2*. In duties Diuine,
Humane, of Charitie and Pietie,
whatsoever is done for Gods sake
and for Conscience sake, is done
equally: No man makes a Con-
science of one, but he that doth
of all: hee that delights in the
breach of one Commandement,
hates all the rest. The rich and
precious boxe of a good Consci-
ence, is polluted and made im-
pure, if but one dead Flye bee suf-
fered; I say not, if one Flye of
Inflammatie light in it, against
the will fore-mentioned, but if
with our will it lye, and dye, and
putrefie in it. When Christ pur-

is wth st.